dropped/foreclosed after incurring an expenditure of Rs. 733.8 crore. The reasons vary from project to project and these include funds constraint, availability of alternatives at low cost, change in planning and considerations of disinvestment.

(c) 27 Standing Committees in the concerned Ministries/Departments have been constituted to look into the reasons for time overrun in projects and fixing responsibility. However, the projects are closed/dropped with the approval of the concerned approving authorities.

National Centre for Soft Computing

1587. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Statistical Institute is planning for setting up of the country's first National Centre for Soft Computing;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed centre; and

(c) what steps the ISI is taking to promote project-based industrial R&D in the country as a part of what has been stated in part (a)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) A center for soft computing research is proposed to be established at the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata with financial assistance from the department of Science and Technology, Government of India. International Center for Pure and Applied Mathematics (CIMPA), France has promised to provide partial support in the form of travel grant to foreign experts for visiting the center.

(b) The salient features of the proposed center are as follows:—

(i) conducting basic research in soft computing, pattern recognition, image processing, machine intelligence and related fields;

(ii) demonstrating applications in the focused areas like web mining, bioinformatics and image analysis;

(iii) developing manpower by (a) imparting training to researchers/students from industry and academia including R&D labs; (b) disseminating, teaching and training material for distance education using multimedia

and video facilities; and (c) offering regular short term advanced courses on upcoming research areas;

(iv) providing a forum for exchanging ideas and establishing linkage among scientists of leading institutions and industry working in similar areas by framing collaborative R & D proposals; and

(v) offering fellowships for helping faculty and scholars from less endowed institutions.

(c) The research output of the center will help in establishing linkage with industry for their benefit. Many industries in India including BHEL, TISCO, Tata Motors, ISRO, CMC have been using conventional methodologies in the areas of vision, pattern recognition, machine learning etc. Soft computing technologies will enhance their product quality and process efficiency to achieve better competitiveness; thereby demonstrating the significant promises of the center for industrial development. In this context, their industries and laboratories have already approached ISI for getting its expertise in the above-mentioned fields.

Setting up of Statistical Commission

1588. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of bringing legislation to set up statistical commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are thinking of issuing an administrative order to set up the Commission rather than bringing a Bill before Parliament; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (d) A proposal to set up a national Statistical Commission by an administrative order is under consideration of Government. Such a measure will enable the Commission to start its activities as soon as possible. It is proposed that this body will bring forward a draft legislation taking into